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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in England in 1990 to determine the impact of the 1988 Education Act, which requires all primary school teachers of the 5-16 age group to pursue a common and detailed national curriculum in each subject. This legislation mirrors the trend within educational systems towards centrally determined goals with local responsibility for achieving them. The act also challenges an entrenched element of English teachers' ideology--that of professional autonomy. The Primary Assessment Curriculum and Experience (PACE) project conducted interviews with 88 teachers and 48 head teachers in 8 local education authorities across the country. These teachers will be interviewed again 2 years later. The research is concerned with feelings about teachers' autonomy as well as how perspectives have changed since the implementation of the act. The findings suggest that most teachers have had to change their teaching approach, classroom practices, and professional role perceptions, resulting in pressures of time, intensification of workload, and a loss of satisfaction in the child-centered aspects of the job. There is also evidence of a loss of autonomy but no indication of an erosion of teachers' professional self-image. Those who remain in the profession are likely in time to internalize the changes, adapt them, and make them their own. (LL)

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PRIMARY ASSESSMENT, CURRICULUM AND EXPERIENCE
A study of educational change under the National Curriculum

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THE IMPACT OF CURRENT CHANGES IN ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

by

Marilyn Osborn and Patricia Broadfoot
with Dorothy Abbott, Paul Croll and Andrew Pollard

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THE IMPACT OF CURRENT CHANGES IN ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS ON TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

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Introduction

At the present time, many education systems are facing rapid change. A major feature of this change, as a number of scholars have remarked (Boyd 1991, Broadfoot 1982, Neave 1989, Moon 1990), appears to be an international trend towards some common and optimal balance between centralised control and professional autonomy. Thus, hitherto highly centralised education systems such as that of France (Archer 1979) are currently initiating major policy changes aimed at encouraging schools and teachers to engage more actively in institutional development and in responding to local needs. Equally, hitherto highly decentralised education systems such as that of England have recently introduced major centralising measures including, in the case of England most notably the unprecedented provision of a national curriculum. This apparent trend towards greater international commonality in the management of educational systems would appear to reflect a widely felt need for education systems to be made on the one hand, as responsive as possible to changing national, social and economic priorities and, on the other, to make them as effective as possible in achieving those goals by capitalising on the creativity and professional commitment of individual teachers.

Indeed, a number of countries, such as England and the United States, have gone even further in this respect in seeking also to employ the discipline of the market to encourage greater efforts by teachers by promoting competition between schools. In short, there would appear to be an international tendency for the goals of education increasingly to be defined by the central Government and for the responsibility for achieving these goals to be laid on local institutions and individual practitioners.

However, this powerful policy trend is based upon a number of currently largely unexamined assumptions. In particular, it assumes that teachers, where necessary, will be both willing and able to adapt their practices in appropriate directions. Yet there is considerable evidence to suggest that this is not so (Grant 1990, Fullan 1986, Acker 1990), that far from being mere puppets pulled by the strings of policy-

makers, teachers mediate the external pressures upon them through the filter of their own professionalism to create a practical reality that is a blend of both personal ideology and external constraints. Thus it follows that if policy-making is to be effective in reality, it must be based both on a sound conceptual understanding of the elements which inform teachers' practice and on empirically generated insights concerning the particular perspectives likely to be held by a particular group of teachers in any given time and place.

In England and Wales the impact of the 1988 Education Reform Act provides an ideal focus for a case study concerned with exploring the relative significance of teacher professionalism as a mediating influence in the impact of educational policy initiatives. As a piece of wide-ranging legislation, it not only mirrors the general trend within educational systems towards centrally-determined goals and local responsibility for achieving them which was referred to above, it also represents a virtually unprecedented attempt to challenge one of the most strongly-entrenched elements of English teachers' ideology - that of professional autonomy. Given that the 1988 Act requires all teachers of the 5-16 age-group to pursue a common and detailed national curriculum in each subject; that children's progress in each of these subjects must be recorded in relation to numerous pre-specified 'attainment targets' which are hierarchically ranked in terms of ten levels; that summaries of children's results must be reported annually to parents and aggregated by teacher and by school for the key ages of 7, 11, 14 and 16; it would certainly appear to be the case that English teachers have little option but to conform to central requirements.

But this attempt on the part of politicians to ride roughshod over strongly held professional ideologies in their desire to both define and to raise standards poses some important and general questions concerning the likely outcome of attempts at educational reform. On the face of it, teachers' options would appear to be:

1. '<u>co-operation</u>': to accept the imposed changes and adjust their professional ideology accordingly so that greater central control is perceived as acceptable or even desirable;

2. '<u>retreatism</u>': to submit to the imposed changes without any change in professional ideology leading to deep-seated feelings of resentment and demoralisation;

3. 'resistance': to resist the imposed changes in the hope that the sanctions available to enforce them will not be sufficiently powerful to make this impossible;

4. 'incorporation': to appear to accept the imposed changes but to incorporate them into existing modes of working so that existing methods are adapted rather than changed and the effect of change is considerably less than that intended.

In the 'Primary Assessment Curriculum and Experience' (PACE) project, a major element of the research is concerned with examining English teachers' responses to current changes along these lines. In particular, we are seeking to examine how primary teachers' perspectives of their work are changing in response to the Education Reform Act and how these perspectives, in some kind of reflexive spiral, are both influencing, and in turn being influenced by, changes in professional practice. In so doing, we hope not only to trace the specific changes currently taking place in English primary education; we also hope to elucidate more generally 'what makes teachers tick' by identifying the relative importance of professional ideology, both for the individual teacher and as a major determinant of school ethos in influencing responses to imposed change.

Theoretical Background

A major part of the theoretical rationale for this study comes from previous research conducted by the authors which was concerned with studying teachers' conceptions of professional responsibility through the comparative focus of the two very different education systems of England and France before both these systems started to undergo major changes. From this earlier work (Broadfoot 1986), it emerged that the most significant influence on teachers' practice in both systems was not the formal apparatus of external obligation and control but the personal sense of professional obligation held by the teachers themselves. Thus French teachers were found to be deeply committed to the need for a national curriculum as the basis both for equality of opportunity and to relieve them of the burden of both producing and justifying more locally-influenced provision.

Whilst this defining characteristic of French teachers' professional ideology arguably owes much to the tradition of strong central control in the French educational system, it is the ideology, not the administrative system, that appears to make a reality of central control in practice. Equally, while English teachers' strong commitment to local autonomy and responsiveness also probably owes much to the tradition of local control in English educational administration, once again our research showed clearly that it is the ideology, rather than the institutional arrangements per se, that is the real determinant of practice.

More recent detailed comparisons of the different professional ideologies of French and English teachers (Broadfoot and Osborn 1988) have extended these general findings to identify in more detail the various elements of each group's professional perspectives. Such comparisons allow the essential similarities common to both groups and probably to teachers in general to be identified and also those national variations in perspective which are clearly the product of long-standing national differences in organisation and approach.

The research suggested that teachers' conceptions of their responsibility in the two countries were characterised by two very different models of professionalism. These models and the dilemmas to which they lead are discussed in more detail elsewhere (Broadfoot and Osborn 1987 and 1988). To summarise briefly, French teachers had a narrower, more restricted and more classroom-focussed conception of their role which centred mainly on what they saw as their responsibility for children's academic progress. This restricted network of obligation was firmly rooted in the hierarchy of the system itself. English teachers in contrast, saw themselves as having a more wide-ranging and diffuse set of responsibilities which encompassed widely-dispersed goals relating to responsibilities outside as well as inside the classroom, including extra-curricular and sometimes even community activities, all aspects of school relationships, accountability to parents, colleagues and the Head. They also had a strong consciousness of the need to justify their actions to others.

At their most extreme, then, a French teacher's perceptions of her role centred on 'meeting one's contractual responsibility' and an English teacher's on 'striving after perfection'.

Thus in terms of the model suggested by Hoyle (1980) teachers in England prior to the introduction of a National Curriculum had an expanded conception of role, an 'extended' professionality (restricted professionality indicating thought and practice

which is largely intuitive and classroom based, while extended professionality takes account of a broader educational context and a wider range of professional activities).

However, even the English teachers in our study were, like those in Lortie's (1975) study of the American primary teacher, essentially individualistic in their outlook. Their conceptions, as Lortie argued, were "not those of colleagues who see themselves as sharing a viable, generalisable body of knowledge and practice. There was little idea of a 'state of the art'. It is not what "we the colleagues know and share" which is paramount but rather "what I have learned through experience". Other studies have confirmed this view of the importance of personal experience for the English teacher (Hargreaves 1984). More recently Jennifer Nias has used the term 'bounded' professionality to describe this type of English primary teacher who, while adhering to whole school perspectives and an interest in collaboration and collegiality, may still be largely atheoretical and school-bounded in their approach to other issues (Nias 1989).

This, then, was how English primary teachers saw their professional responsibility prior to the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act. In spite of being increasingly constrained on all sides, they nevertheless believed strongly in their autonomy and saw it as central to their 'extended' role that they be able to define and decide for themselves both <u>what</u> they would teach and <u>how</u> they would teach it. However, in the light of the sweeping and comprehensive change introduced by ERA, (see attached handout), change which brings English education much closer to the French model, some educationists have queried whether 'professionalism' and 'professionality' are still valid concepts in relation to teachers and their work. Arguments have been advanced both for the deskilling, intensification and proletarianisation of teachers' work, for seeing teachers' work (Apple 1986) (Lawn and Ozga, 1981) in terms of accountability rather than professionalism. and for the move from 'professionalism' to 'managerialism' in English education. For example, Ball (1990) has argued that "teachers are becoming subject to new relations of production". The introduction of management techniques into education, the establishment of a formal contract for teachers with fixed working hours, and the reduction in scope for teacher decision-making brought about by the introduction of the National Curriculum and National Testing have, he argues, severely constrained and delimited the professional role of the teacher and emphasised an 'employee' as distinct from a 'professional' perspective for teachers' work. Local management of

Schools, he argues, even leads to a view of teachers as "commodities, interchangeable with books, paint, and new desks".

Thus, for Ball, the Education Reform Act is about "control over teachers and teachers' work. It rests upon a profound distrust of teachers and seeks to close down many of the areas of discretion previously available to them. In doing this it brings into being a massively over-determined system of education. The National curriculum and National Testing provide the belt and braces of central controls, and the market offers a further carrot-and-stick mode of constraint. Embedded in all this are confused and contradictory views of the 'new teacher', ranging from the innovative and competitive 'petit-professional' to the harassed, reactive teaching technician." (Ball 1990)

These are powerful and compelling arguments. However, (as Ball himself recognises) they focus only upon what appear to be the 'intended' consequences of the Education Reform Act, and ignore the possibilities of 'unintended' consequences, in particular the gap between central policy and the way it is interpreted and implemented in schools and by individual teachers and above all, they ignore the central role played by teachers' ideologies in interpreting, accommodating, or resisting State policy, as underlined by the Bristaix project (Broadfoot and Osborn 1987, 1988). The PACE project, whose preliminary findings we present in this paper (refer to handout), goes beyond the study of policy change to examine teachers' own conceptions of how their role and professional responsibilities are changing as a result of the introduction of a National Curriculum and Assessment.

In exploring further the theme of teacher professionalism, we were concerned with a number of questions arising directly out of our previous work. In broad terms, if, as we had found previously, teachers' ideologies were closely linked to institutional arrangements and to the structure of a particular education system, a central question was whether changes in these institutional arrangements would change teachers' ideologies, or whether the power of existing ideologies would subvert the imposition of change from above. As the National Curriculum and Assessment began to take effect, would teachers retreat into being classroom teachers only, seeing as their sole tasks the academic development of children and the meeting of the attainment targets? Were they beginning to adopt a more 'restricted' model of professional responsibility even to feel a loss of professional status, to feel deskilled? Or were their conceptions of what constituted professionalism simply changing? Were the new demands being placed upon them requiring them to respond more 'as a body'

rather than as individuals and were teachers beginning to take on board the changes, to accommodate to them and make them their own, even to subvert them, or to mediate them to what might be perceived as more professional ends?

In the first phase of the research, PACE interviewed 88 teachers and 48 head teachers in 8 Local Education Authorities across the country at an early stage of the implementation of the Education Reform Act. Two years on, teachers will be interviewed again to examine how their perceptions have changed as the reforms take further effect.

The preliminary findings we present here are based on the first round of interviews carried out in May 1990. We asked teachers about the degree of freedom/autonomy they felt they had had prior to the implementation of a National Curriculum and Assessment; and whether there had been any changes after its implementation; whether they felt their role as a teacher and their priorities had changed and how. Teachers also talked about whether the changes had affected their relationships with colleagues and parents, what they felt would be the long-term effects on primary teaching as a profession, and whether they would still choose to be a teacher.

Philosophy and Practice:

Changes in Teaching Approach and in the Working Day

Most teachers to whom we talked welcomed at least some aspects of the National Curriculum particularly the curriculum clarification and focus it provided. However, there were strong feelings about many aspects of the reforms, not least about the pace and extent of change as we shall indicate subsequently. While many argued that some of the National Curriculum equated with good practice and 'was what good teachers were doing already' it was striking that nearly half of all the teachers interviewed felt that they had to make changes to their teaching approach as a result of the implementation of the National Curriculum and assessment. Not surprisingly, the most important changes teachers identified were either in their approach to the content of the curriculum, to assessment, or to record keeping, but nearly one fifth said that it had been necessary to change their approach to planning and to closer involvement with colleagues. A smaller proportion felt that they were responding to time pressure by having to re-think their previously child-centred methods and some also argued that they were having to be more aware and more conscious of their own practice.

These changes in general approach and teaching philosophy were reflected in changes in their day to day practice with an overwhelming majority of teachers (87%) saying that their working day had had to change in response to the implementation of the National Curriculum and assessment. For most the changes had been in the direction of more time spent on record-keeping (60%), assessment (30%), meetings (19%), and planning with the resulting pressure that this involved.

Table 1:

Proportion of teachers identifying the following changes to their working day.

Type of change	Percentage
More record keeping	60.2
More assessment	29.7
More meetings	19.3
Change in curriculum content	27.3
Change in teaching methods	6.8
Other (more planning and more pressure)	25.0

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% since teachers identified up to 3 changes.

There was certainly evidence here for the 'intensification' of teachers' work (in the sense of chronic work overload) (Apple 1988, Lawn and Ozga 1988) with many teachers either having to work longer hours or having to work in a more concentrated, less relaxed way in order to get through their workload. There was a general feeling of being swamped by change. "Too much has happened too quickly," was the way many teachers put it. While they were developing new ways of working, particularly in the area of record-keeping and assessment, more information would arrive which superseded it, meaning that they had wasted their time. For example, keeping up with the documentation which accompanied the National Curriculum was seen by most as "simply overwhelming". "Far too much to assimilate. I have just had to give up on it for the time being," as one teacher put it.

Perceived Changes in Teachers' Role

Nearly two-thirds of the teachers (65%) felt that their role as a teacher had changed to some extent, and for some, these changes were fairly profound. For the majority of teachers the impact of these changes was also perceived to be largely negative. They mentioned more bureaucracy (41%) and increased planning (34%), a loss of spontaneity and child-centredness in their teaching (20%), increased stress and anxiety (23%), the strong sense of the imposition of external priorities on the teachers (17%), and a feeling of loss of autonomy and of creativity (11%). As one teacher put it:

> 'I'm just more stressed now. I feel pulled in different directions and I feel the need to fulfil attainment targets and to cover the core subjects as a constant unspoken pressure. The relaxed atmosphere I used to have in my class is gone. I can't spend so much time with individual children and I don't feel able to respond in a spontaneous way to some initiative introduced by the children. I no longer have the luxury of being responsive and creative.'

These strongly negative feelings were only counter-balanced to a limited extent by the positive feelings of those who saw the changes as having the effect of focussing and confirming their role (16%) or of leading them towards closer co-operation with colleagues (16%).

Table 2:
Impact of change on the teacher's role: Percentage of teachers identifying the following factors

Factors	Percentage
Negative	
More bureaucracy/administration	40.9
Increased time on planning	34.0
Increased stress/anxiety	22.7
Loss of spontaneity/child-centredness	20.4
Imposition of priorities on teacher from outside	17.0
Loss of autonomy/more mechanistic/less creative	11.4
Positive	
Close co-operation with colleagues	15.9
Has focussed and confirmed role	15.9
Neutral	
Accountability increased	14.7

Note: Totals do not add up to 100% since teachers could identify more than one change.

It was those teachers who perceived themselves as strongly child-centred, creative, and spontaneous in their approach who often felt that they had the most to lose under the National Curriculum. Where a high value had been placed on "a relaxed time with children" this was now felt to be eroded by time pressures.

A number of these teachers expressed a feeling that the things which were of central importance to them in teaching were under attack, but that they would defend them no matter what. As one teacher argued:

> 'I am not prepared to become somebody walking round with a checksheet and I will fight it ... I think my place is with the children, making a relationship with them - it's not fiddling around with bits of paper or spending all my time talking with their parents.'

It was striking that, when asked about their own strengths as a teacher, 75% emphasised 'affective' skills, being good at relationships, with children, colleagues,

and parents, compared with only 34% who mentioned management skills. Yet more teachers (44%) perceived management skills to be of increasing importance under the National Curriculum. It is not surprising therefore that 22% felt that their skills were being eroded by the National Curriculum. Thus one teacher argued that to be a good teacher:

> 'It's got to be first of all an ability to have a good relationship with children ....to be able to encourage, cajole them into working hard ... to be lively, full of fun - to provide a stimulating environment where they want to come to school and they want to learn. Some of one's spontaneity gets dampened by the rigorous demands of the National Curriculum. Some of the very special times in a primary classroom are when you just respond spontaneously to childrens' ideas. There is not much time or scope for that now.'

However, these perceptions of 'deskilling' were counter-balanced by the equal proportion (22%) who felt their skills were being complemented by the changes and by the 42% who said the National Curriculum had not yet had an influence. Only 12% thought that their skills might be affected in future, either positively (6%) or negatively (6%).

While many teachers were clearly not happy with the impact of the changes on their work, it seems that less than a quarter felt strongly enough to see this in terms of 'deskilling'. Indeed, for a few, the National Curriculum was perceived as 'enhancing' their skills or providing the opportunity to develop them further.

Although it was self-evident that the imposition of a National Curriculum would reduce the individual teacher's freedom to choose the 'content' of the curriculum, it was not so clear to what extent it might affect their freedom over how they taught. For example, it has been argued by Hargreaves (1988) that having less responsibility for deciding curriculum content will release teachers' energies to engage in developing new pedagogic approaches. Others, however, have argued that the external pressures will compel teachers to change their teaching methods (Osborn and Broadfoot 1990). 45% of the teachers we interviewed had experienced some loss of autonomy over teaching methods, although only 14% said that their autonomy had been considerably reduced, while nearly half had experienced no change in freedom over teaching methods. From the responses to other questions, however, it was apparent that although many still retained a considerable degree of freedom over their teaching methods as individuals, there was more whole school planning of topic

work than previously and more decision-making as a body rather than as individuals over curriculum planning. Many schools had appointed 'curriculum co-ordinators' for each National Curriculum subject area, whose role it was to advise and work with colleagues on the implementation of that subject area. However, this was seldom mentioned by teachers as a constraint on their freedom and was generally seen in a positive, constructive light.

Thus, many teachers definitely felt a loss of autonomy in their teaching since the advent of the National Curriculum, and saw it as to some extent eroding professional freedom. A large number of teachers talked of a loss of freedom and creativity in their teaching, of feeling increasingly like "a machine for delivering a prescribed curriculum", as well as a loss of a career structure, and of the feeling of doing an important job. One teacher said:

> 'I knew that teaching was going to be about long hours and a lot of preparation. That was always my inclination and I knew the demands of working with young children, but I never for one moment thought that there wouldn't be some sort of career structure, some sort of proper development and support and just a feeling of doing an important job. I don't think that feeling is there any more and I think that has come through more and more since the National Curriculum'

However, a significant minority spoke of the positive effect of having a structure and guidelines to work within. This, they felt, released them to be creative in the way they worked with individual children rather than worry about whether they had covered what should be covered. As one teacher put it:

> 'I feel that at least now there is some guideline as to what you should have achieved in the amounts of time that you have had with children..... Up till now I have always felt that in teaching I'm not doing enough. I could always be doing more, which I think every teacher feels. Things were so open that you could never feel you had done a good job.

These teachers felt that the emphasis which the National Curriculum placed on reviewing and reflecting on their practice, and on having to read more widely and to collaborate more closely with other teachers, was an enhancement of their professionalism. For a few, this extended to their relationship with parents. Most teachers (59%) said there had been no change in this area, but 10% felt that their relationship with parents had improved because of the National Curriculum, and felt that parents saw teachers as more professional now that they reported back on individual children and used written records and schemes of work.

Effects of Future Changes on the Nature of Teachers' Work

We were aware that we were asking teachers about the effects of the changes in education at a very early stage of implementation, when their impact might not be fully felt. Indeed, many teachers who felt reasonably comfortable with what had happened so far, nevertheless expressed fears about the future. When asked how they thought primary education would develop in the next five to ten years, most were either pessimistic (47%) or had mixed feelings (34%). Over 60% predicted that the degree of teacher stress would be such that there would be heavy dropout from the profession, and nearly a quarter predicted further constraints, loss of autonomy and a narrowing of the teachers' role.

On a more optimistic note, 33% felt that the changes would soon lessen in intensity, things would sort themselves out, and the worst aspects of the National Curriculum and assessment would disappear. A small minority once again saw things in a more positive light and predicted more collaboration between teachers and more review and reflection by teachers on their practice.

Table 3:
Percentage predicting the following changes in the nature of teachers' work

Type of change	Percentage
More teacher stress/drop out	61.4
More constraints/loss of autonomy	23.9
More collaboration amongst teachers	10.2
More reflection, review of practice	5.7
Pace of change will lessen/worst aspects of National Curriculum will disappear	32.9

Note: Totals do not equal 100% since teachers could predict more than one change.

In spite of largely pessimistic predictions about the future 46% said that if they had to choose again they would still choose to be a teacher,, while 25% were undecided. However, a number of the former group said that they would not encourage a son or daughter to enter teaching and some had already actively discouraged a child with plans for teaching.

Perhaps their feelings were well expressed by one inner city teacher who said,

"I've got a tremendous amount out of teaching, a tremendous amount, and I think that's partly the reason why I feel so strongly about this, and why I've got so depressed about it all is because I can see what's being destroyed. I've thought seriously several times this year about throwing it in because I can't stand it any longer. On the other hand, that seems defeatist ... if it becomes more and more inflexible and we get less and less control over the way we teach, and the children become less and less important then I shall leave, because there'll be no pleasure in it any more and I shan't feel that I'm doing a worthwhile job. It's not what I consider to be education."

Summary and Conclusions

The evidence presented here suggests that most teachers have had to change their teaching approach , their classroom practice and their perception of their professional role in ways which they would not have chosen for themselves, resulting in pressures of time, intensification of workload, and a loss of satisfaction in the child-centred aspects of the job. There is evidence of a loss of autonomy and a certain amount of demoralisation counterbalanced by positive feelings experienced by a few.

Teachers appear to have polarised to some extent in their response to the changes, at one end of the spectrum, are those who see the changes as an attempt to turn them into 'a checklist person', and who are determined to resist what they perceive to be the worst features of the changes while adopting the rest. At the other end of the spectrum are those who perceive the changes in a more positive light, as an attempt not to destroy teacher autonomy, but to alter it so that they become 'collaborative professionals' rather than autonomous individual teachers. Subsequent data analysis will attempt to identify the variables both at 'institutional' and at a more 'individual' level which lead teachers to adopt one or other of these stances.

It is also likely that the responses we have identified here are only interim responses to the changes. There is some evidence from recent American research that Texan teachers who were initially hostile to similar changes imposed from above, have, three years on, become much more reconciled, seeing most of the reforms in a positive light (Roberts 1991). Further phases of our research will monitor the longer-term impact of the changes on teachers.

However, at an early stage in the implementation of the changes (May 1990), the evidence we have presented suggests that the response of the majority of teachers appears to be one of 'incorporation', rather than 'resistance' or 'retreatism', ie a feeling that "I'll accept the changes, but I won't allow anything I consider to be really important to be lost." As one Head teacher put it:

> 'I think I feel less uncomfortable than I did. Just about this time last year I wrote a letter to my senior adviser telling him that I was very seriously thinking of resigning because I was not prepared to have a dictated curriculum and I was not prepared for somebody to change the job I loved into one I didn't even recognise. He was very good about that ... And we had a long talk about acting subversively - it

> sounds awful but - if you were really convinced about what you were saying was right, then you looked at the national curriculum and you used it as a tool really, rather than letting it drive you ... I feel happier about it than I did a year ago.'

Several other teachers talked of using the National Curriculum as a tool, 'taking what is best from it, and leaving the rest' and 'not letting it govern everything I do'. As one teacher put it:

> 'I'll never sacrifice the children. I'll go on doing what I think best for them regardless'.

There was very little evidence of open resistance amongst teachers, but some considerable evidence of 'retreatism', particularly amongst some older teachers who, at the time of the interviews, were about to take early retirement or were strongly considering it. One such teacher, with 34 years of experience, expressed her feelings as:

> 'It has changed my job to a job I detest from a job I loved and I've been a teacher since 1957. It's taken me away from the people I was trained to help..... It is my whole job satisfaction, my whole outlook, everything's gone. My joy has gone ....' 'If I had the money I'd leave, only I've got a husband who's retired and I'm the only money earner, so I've got to keep going, and that's the only reason I'm still here.'

'Co-operation', acceptance of the imposed changes, was most noticeable among young teachers who had newly entered the profession, most of whom had never experienced teaching pre-ERA. It was also a stance adopted by some Headteachers with a strong, managerial-organisational orientation who saw the National Curriculum as a protective device and a means for facilitating their role as managers and innovators. As one Headteacher put it:

> 'It's a powerful lever for me in getting things done in school. It would be a harder struggle without the National Curriculum in getting any change. I use it as an enhancer for what I want to do anyway. It's an enhancing process because it forces us to be clearer about what we want to do. It gives a clearer focus to work'.

While there is some evidence that the reforms may be affecting the objective conditions of teachers' work in a way which supports the 'deskilling', 'intensification' and 'proletarianisation' thesis (Densmore, 1987) it is clear that teachers themselves still adhere to an ideology of professionalism. There is certainly no indication of an erosion of teachers' professional self-image to the extent that they are resisting the reforms and organising collectively against them. Indeed the evidence suggests that those teachers who remain in the profession are likely as time goes on to internalise the changes, adapt them and make them their own. The effect is likely to be different and probably less powerful than that originally intended by Government policy. The data we have presented suggests that educational change cannot be brought about simply by manipulating institutional structures or by issuing policy directives. To be successful it must involve teachers from the outset and take into account the real influences on teachers' professional motivation and practice.

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